

For Immediate Release

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Roanoke County to Host First-Ever Community Digital Forum

County Officials and CivicPlus Government Website Experts Invite Residents to an Interactive Exchange on Features, Services and Public Safety Applications of the County's New Website



ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (June 14, 2011) – Roanoke County's Communications & Information Technology and Public Safety officials are teaming up with [CivicPlus](#), the national leader in open government technology, to host the state's first Community Digital Forum from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, June 29, 2011 at the Roanoke County Public Safety Center at 5925 Cove Road in Roanoke.

Citizens from Roanoke County and surrounding communities are invited to learn how to take full advantage of the new and improved features and tools built into the new County [website](#), which officially launched in mid-March. The Community Digital Forum will include hands-on demonstrations, a Q & A session, and the opportunity to share ideas for future enhancements with County officials and fellow citizens.

"Roanoke County's new website is much more than a convenient place to learn about County-related public meetings, programs, tax information, news and special events," said Bill Greeves,

the County's Director of Communications and Information Technology. "When an emergency situation occurs, like the tornadoes that tore through Pulaski in early April, the County website can be a lifeline that guides you and your family to safety."

The County's Public Information and Communication & Information Technology teams will walk citizens step-by-step through features like emergency alerts via email, mobile and text, social media links and a wide range of mobile applications.

Public Safety officials will also show attendees how citizens can quickly access vital information about road closures, evacuation procedures and other important safety instructions in the event of an emergency.

"We only wish we could have had these emergency notification features at our fingertips last December when 12-year-old Brittany Smith was abducted in Roanoke County," Greeves said. "Our website now allows us to post such alerts on our home page; upload critical maps, photos and other graphics; and issue updates to alert subscribers via email and text messages."

Representatives of CivicPlus, who developed and designed the new County website, will be on hand to share insights into online trends in citizen engagement and future applications that will help residents communicate with all levels of government in new and more efficient ways.

"It is our hope that this community event will become a model for public-private collaboration in technology education," said Ward Morgan, president of CivicPlus. "CivicPlus goes beyond typical government websites to create powerful, easy-to-use community engagement systems that connect people with government in new, more efficient ways. Other CivicPlus communities have expressed interest in hosting their own community forums, and Roanoke County is the pioneer. We look forward to building on what Roanoke County has started."

Advance registration is requested, but walk-ins are welcome. To register or to find out more, please contact Teresa Hall at thall@roanokecountyva.gov or call (540) 772-2010.

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About CivicPlus

CivicPlus develops, designs and manages award-winning community engagement systems that use advanced technology to connect people with government in new, more efficient ways. Founded in 2001 in Manhattan, KS, CivicPlus has built more than 860 government websites, which serve more than 29.4 million citizens in cities and counties throughout North America. The innovative CivicPlus Government Content Management System™ includes more than 60 customizable, integrated eGovernment applications including Citizen Request Tracker™, MuniMobile™, Facebook and economic development tools. Over the past two years, CivicPlus has won more than 175 website awards, including the Center for Digital Government's Best Fit Integrator Award of 2009 for delivering extraordinary digital solutions to public IT projects.